

THE BYZANTINE MISSION TO THE SLAVS

Report on the Dumbarton Oaks Symposium of 1964
and
Concluding Remarks about Crucial Problems
of Cyrillo-Methodian Studies

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BOTH Thessalonian brothers are presented by two quite diverse Latin sources of their epoch in nearly identical terms. *Quirillus quidam, natione Grecus* is praised in the oldest version of the Czech Latin Christian's legend. *Quidam Graecus, Methodius nomine* is scorned in the Frankish document *Conversio Bagoariorum et Carantanorum*. Both brothers were Greek by origin, education, cultural background, and inclination; both rendered important services to the Byzantine Empire and Church, and both were sent by the Emperor and apparently also (*takože i*) by the Patriarch on a responsible mission to Moravia. Father Dvornik's momentous volume—*Les Légendes de Constantin et de Méthode vues de Byzance* (Prague, 1933)—and his lifelong inquiry into the activities of Constantine-Cyril and Methodius among the Slavs showed that their manifold work must be studied and interpreted in the light of Byzantine cultural, ecclesiastic, and political problems, as the title of his book suggests. It was the idea of an indissoluble connection between the Cyrillo-Methodian legacy and its Eastern Roman fountainhead which inspired the Dumbarton Oaks Symposium on the Byzantine Mission to the Slavs.

Doubts had been cast on the Old Church Slavonic *Vitae* of Constantine-Cyril and Methodius as to the age of these two legends, or at least of their Slavic texts, and as to the trustworthiness of their factual data. In the *Analecta Bollandiana* of 1955, P. Meyvaert and P. Devos demonstrated that the end of 882 is the *terminus ante quem* the *Vita* of Constantine the Philosopher had been composed *Sclavorum litteris*, and that the supplementary *Vita* of his brother and successor Methodius must also have been

written in Moravia and only a few years later. Equally definitive is the following rejoinder to the skeptics.

Professor Francis Dvornik's introductory lecture "Ninth-Century Moravia and the Byzantine Mission" summed up and substantially reinforced his argumentation for the high reliability and value of the various historical testimonies preserved in both *Vitae*. Their reports about the intercourse of the mission with Constantinople and Rome find convincing foundation and motivation in the light of the evolving relations between the papacy and Byzantium. The organic connection between the religious, cultural, and political purposes of the Byzantine mission, and the tenacious fight of Moravian Slavs for total independence from Frankish pressure and infiltration becomes ever more evident. The Byzantine mission differs radically in its scope, cultural background, and intentions from the rudimentary ecclesiastic organization under the patronage of the Passau bishopric; the former agency cannot be regarded as a continuation of the latter, and the *Vita Methodii* could therefore praise his and his brother's Moravian activities *nostri populi gratia, cuius nemo unquam curam gessit*. Cyril's first aim on arriving in Moravia was to supply the young Church with liturgical books in the Slavic language. The brothers were not of the Roman but of the Byzantine obedience; hence, there is nothing dubious in the circumstantial and rapturous report of the *Vita Constantini* about the Slavic liturgy long before their visit to Rome and the papal approval of this daring innovation.

"The Byzantine Background of the Moravian Mission" was the topic of the paper sent

by Professor George Ostrogorsky from Belgrade. The mission to Moravia was an impressive manifestation of Byzantine religious and cultural expansion and belongs to the same great decade as Constantinople's efforts to cement contacts with the Slavic South and East. In the gradual process of regaining *Slavinias*, the organization of the Thessalonian region as a Byzantine theme in the early ninth century was a significant achievement. Thessalonica, with its bilingual population, was the principal gate leading from the Empire to the Slavic world. The highest aspirations of the Byzantine State and Church found in Constantine of Thessalonica a most remarkable intellectual exponent, who helped to further the awakening of self-awareness among the Slavs and who assisted them in their defense against German encroachment.

Professor George C. Soulis surveyed "The Legacy of Cyril and Methodius to the Southern Slavs." After its collapse in Moravia, the work of the Slavic apostles was saved for the Slavs and Europe by Bulgaria when its ruler Boris, in his endeavor to establish a national church, protected and encouraged the Slavic missionaries who sought refuge in his land. Thus, the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition was preserved and further cultivated in Ochrid and Preslav, two great and dissimilar centers which created a rich literature and culture Byzantine in inspiration, yet Slavic in language and ideology. This trend, inaugurated in Moravia, developed in Bulgaria, and further transmitted to the Serbs and Russians, succeeded in converting its Byzantine premises into a program of national self-determination and universal equality, with particular emphasis on the sovereign rights of Slavic, as well as any other vernacular, in ecclesia and in all branches of spiritual life.

In his lecture on "The Heritage of Cyril and Methodius in Russia," Professor Dimitri Obolensky was able to trace, despite the paucity of direct evidence, the initial stages of Christianity in Russia and the penetration of the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition into the Kievan state. It is beyond doubt that St. Vladimir's baptism, largely patronized by Byzantine authorities, was followed by a rapid establishment of Slavic liturgy in

Russia. Apparently these authorities realized that the Church of the Slavic apostles was the only one that could be successfully imposed upon the numerous population of that powerful and distant country. By the eleventh century priests of Slavic tongue, both natives and newcomers from abroad, mainly from Bulgaria, must have been active in Kievan Russia. The Russian *Primary Chronicle* cherished the memory of the Slavic apostles and recognized their fundamental contribution to the enlightenment of the Russian people. The Cyrillo-Methodian literature of Moravia took over the eastern patristic belief in the Pentecostal abrogation of Babel and identified the emergence of the Slavic liturgy with the gift of tongues, and this idea was echoed by the *Primary Chronicle*. The same composite quotation from Isaiah which was used in Moravian writings, especially in the *Vita Constantini*, was reproduced by the *Primary Chronicle* to glorify Vladimir's educational efforts, which were in this way equated with Rastislav's and Constantine's joint work in Moravia; and what particularly exemplified the vitality of this tradition in Russia was that St. Stephen of Perm, enlightener of the Zyrians and translator of the Scripture into their vernacular in the late fourteenth century, was praised in his *Vita* by a repetition of the same quotation, and that, in general, Epiphanius the Wise, the author of this *Vita*, modeled it upon the early Cyrillo-Methodian literature.

The lecture of Professor Horace G. Lunt was devoted to "Greek Influences in Early Slavonic." From the beginning the language of the Cyrillo-Methodian mission was fashioned upon Greek; direct borrowings and especially translations from Greek built a substantial layer of the Church Slavonic vocabulary, complemented by a strong influence of Greek upon word derivation and composition, phraseology and syntax, and style. The radiation of calques from Greek in Christian terminology widely oversteps the limits of Church Slavonic proper, encompasses the entire Slavic territory, and continues despite the later restriction in the number of countries adhering to Slavic liturgy. The expansion of Old Church Slavonic in the ninth to eleventh centuries was facilitated by the lasting lexical, grammatical, and phonologic

proximity of all Slavic vernaculars. Old Church Slavonic assumed the role of a common Slavic literary language, intended from the beginning to fulfill all spiritual tasks and at the time of its maximal inter-Slavic expansion, in the eleventh century, used by Bulgarians, Serbs, Croats, Russians, Czechs, and Poles. In countries that clung to Slavic liturgy, regional recensions of Church Slavonic served for ecclesiastic writings, while literature of a more secular character resorted to various hybrid combinations of this language with the native vernacular. The basic unity of the Church Slavonic language was preserved and supported by repeated efforts to eliminate divergences: e.g., the dependence of the Serbian recension on the Russian one in the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries; the second South Slavic influence upon Russian from the end of the fourteenth century; the mutual adaptations of the Moscow and Kievan recensions, with orientation toward the former in the sixteenth and toward the latter in the seventeenth century; likewise in the seventeenth century an adherence of the Croatian recension to the Kievan model; the Russian recension adopted by the Serbs in the eighteenth, and by the Bulgarians in the nineteenth century. Unfortunately, no history of Church Slavonic in its different regional variants and their interaction has yet been written. These conservative and expansive tendencies furthered literary and cultural exchange between countries of Slavic liturgy. Serial translations which at different moments in different Slavic regions vacillated between a creative adaptation and a slavish, mechanistic literalism secured the ties between Church Slavonic and Greek, and the history of this translational technique and of the Greek imprint borne by Church Slavonic and by those literary languages which preserved a Church Slavonic substratum still awaits detailed investigation.

Professor Antonín Dostál discussed "The Origins of the Slavonic Liturgy." According to the *Vita Methodii*, both Greek and Latin missionaries must have worked in Moravia before the arrival of the Thessalonian brothers. The Old Church Slavonic liturgic texts have to be interpreted rather as free adjustments than as literal translations of

foreign models. The surmise that Constantine-Cyril introduced a Slavic adaptation of Latin liturgy is based on the *Kievan leaflets*, but they differ in language from his authentic writings and apparently the text of these leaflets was translated at a later date; perhaps it belongs even to the Bohemian period of Church Slavonic worship, although Bohemia of the tenth century also maintains vestiges of the Byzantine rite. The question whether or not the liturgy of St. Peter was translated and used by the brothers can hardly be answered affirmatively. As to the *Prague fragments*, their text is translated from Greek, but both the source of their composition and the origin of their protograph remain unclear, and we still face the urgent task of applying the modern techniques for making the underlayer of this palimpsest available. Presumably the Byzantine mission in Moravia first introduced a Slavonic version of John Chrysostom's liturgy, as a fragment of this translation in the *Sinai leaflets* testifies. The coexistence of Slavonic with Greek or Latin in the Cyrillo-Methodian mass remains undetermined. Also the question whether Church Slavonic penetrated into Poland from the Cyrillo-Methodian mission or only later from Bohemia is still controversial.

"Old Church Slavonic Poetry" was approached by Professor Roman Jakobson. This poetry, hitherto usually overlooked in mediaeval studies, belongs to the most abundant and remarkable products of the powerful Byzantine impact upon the Slavic civilization. It was deeply rooted in the wide creative activities of the two truly bilingual brothers and endowed the Moravian literature of the 860's to the 880's with magnificent masterpieces of both hymnody and paraenesis. Throughout the tenth and eleventh centuries, in all the regional variants of Old Church Slavonic language and culture, poetic art continued the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition. The late Middle Ages witnessed a further evolution of this poetry in those countries which still used Church Slavonic as their ecclesiastic language. Finally, the formation of modern Russian poetry in the eighteenth century and its subsequent drift were much influenced by the liturgical tradition of ecclesiastic chants. Thanks to progress in the comparative investigation of Byzantine and

Church Slavonic chants, students of the song books copied in Russia in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries can detect and reconstruct their prototypes which prove to be at least two to three centuries older. In particular, the analysis of the early Slavic original canons enables us to ascribe to the Moravian mission of the 870's and 880's, and to its leader Methodius, not only the canon for St. Demetrius of Thessalonica but also, beyond any doubt, the Church Slavonic Hirmologion, and to throw new light upon the vexed question of the divine service practiced by this mission. The intimate connection of this canon with the Cyrillo-Methodian mission is attested by the final ode, a poignant yearning, in the struggle against "the cruel trilinguals and heretics," for a return from wanderings over strange lands to the native Thessalonica, while the close textual and metrical coherence between the canon's troparia and hirmoi proves the anterior Slavic translation of the Hirmologion. (Both this paper and the following two are to appear in *Monumenta Musicae Byzantinae: Studies on the Fragmenta Chilandarica Palaeoslavica, II—Fundamental Problems of Early Slavic Music and Poetry.*)

Professor Oliver Strunk analyzed "Two Chilandari Choir Books," the *Triodion Chilandari* 307 and the *Hirmologion Chilandari* 308, both published in 1957 as a part of the series *Monumenta Musicae Byzantinae*. These two choir books, like other ancient monuments of Slavic chant, preserve vestiges of archaic musical and liturgical practices; they can shed new light on the early history of Byzantine music, and the *Triodion* in particular might even be said to constitute a compensating replacement for a type of Byzantine manuscript that must once have existed but is no longer extant. Professor Strunk concluded that 1. the archaic Slavic notation is of Byzantine origin; 2. it must have been introduced well before the year 1000, perhaps as early as 950; 3. at some time after the year 1000, perhaps as late as 1050, it was modified in certain respects and these modifications were again of Byzantine origin; and 4. in certain other respects it is an original creation because it restricts the use of some of its borrowed signs in ways quite unfamiliar to Byzantium

and because it has invented at least one sign of its own. Even with these modifications, however, the Slavic notation continues to retain its archaic character, for the revisions to which it was subjected were minor ones, affecting only isolated details. However intimately one may come to understand the workings of an archaic notation like this one, to think in terms of a positive transcription on the five-line staff is simply to deceive oneself. Under favorable conditions, and with the help of unambiguous, unimpeachable controls, in particular of a Byzantine control, one can as a rule work out a sort of reconstruction, but the result is highly tentative. As such an experiment, a musical reconstruction of a Slavic translated hirmos is proposed.

Professor Kenneth J. Levy dealt with "The Earliest Slavic Melismatic Chants"; he analyzed an Old Russian kontakarion, and concluded that the origins of the Slavic melismatic chants are firmly rooted in Byzantium. The enigma of the kontakarion notation is finally opened to solution. This notation enables the musicologist to explore the structure of the asmatic melodies. Their centonate-formulaic design underlies the compositional process for many, if not most, early liturgies, and the Slavic chants, preserving the earliest state of the Byzantine melismatic traditions, have a unique contribution to make toward the understanding of this process. The notation of these Slavic chants shows not only archaisms related to the early characters of Byzantine notation, but also points of contact with Greek developments of the eleventh century. The question whether these chants were taken over from Byzantium during the same ninth-century wave of musical and liturgical activity that witnessed the borrowing of the syllabic chants or somewhat later must be left open.

In his second lecture, on "Recent Archaeological Discoveries in the Territories of Great Moravia," Professor Dvornik gave a condensed account of the Moravian and Slovak excavations conducted on a large scale since 1948. Remnants of sixteen or seventeen stone churches of the ninth century have so far been discovered, whereas until recently it was thought that there were no stone churches in the state of Rastislav and

Sventopluk. The main finds are concentrated around two neighboring Moravian settlements—Staré Město, presumably the seat of Archbishop Methodius and his disciples, and Mikulčice, the probable stronghold of Prince Rastislav, with remains of stone walls, a stone palace, and mansions of nobles. Among the churches found in these centers, several were built after the advent of the Byzantine mission, e.g., the third church unearthed in Mikulčice, the largest discovered so far in Moravia, and other churches with an elongated apse. Similar church architecture is found at a later period in Southern Russia, where Byzantine missionaries were active. Most probably this style was brought to Moravia by the Byzantine mission. Yet, since this type of construction was dominant in Pannonia, Noricum, and Istria during the early Christian period, it could have been revived in Moravia as well by missionaries from Istria and Dalmatia. As to the churches belonging to the first half of the ninth century, Professor Dvornik rejects the controversial hypothesis of their connection with the Irish-Scottish style and with the unlikely activities of Irish missionaries in Moravia. He raises the question of possible links with the Byzantine cities on the Adriatic. Among the examples of minor arts, only a few objects so far discovered could be positively regarded as imported from Byzantium, but local workshops of native and immigrant artisans in Moravia must have adopted Byzantine patterns.

The Symposium, as was stated in the concluding remarks, illustrated the far-reaching role of the Cyrillo-Methodian mission in space and time, and the wide range of religious, cultural, and political problems which were brought forward and bequeathed to Slavdom by the brothers' venture. The Byzantine roots of their work and legacy were carefully traced, whereas all the incessant, yet groundless, conjectures about some pre-Cyrillian Slavic alphabet (despite the clear statement of the *Vita Constantini* XIV: *Ne spt" togo obrēli*, "it has not been found"), and attempts to attribute an exaggerated cultural significance to earlier missions in Moravia or to the faint rudiments of Slavic translations before Constantine's Evangelary, and to deny to the Byzantine mission

any role in the erection of Moravian and Pannonian churches, were explicitly disproved. In the discussion of the Byzantine impact on the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition, it was made clear that these cultural impulses came not only from Constantinople but also from Thessalonica and from Adriatic coastal cities.

The most important feature of the mission was the vernacularization of the Scripture and divine service, as both Constantine's poetic Prologue (*Proglas*) to the translated Gospels, and the two *Vitae* eloquently confirm. According to the *Vita Constantini* XIV, Rastislav asked the Emperor to send a teacher who would translate the true Christian faith "into our own language" (the formula *v" svoi ny język*" with the predictable anteposition of the enclitic dative *ny* obviously cannot be regarded as an interpolation), and in his answer the Emperor refers to the letters revealed to Constantine by the Lord "for your language" (*v" vaš' język*") as an extraordinary privilege which will "rank you among the great nations that praise God in their own language" (*svoim' językom*'). This tolerance toward a "barbarian" vernacular, acknowledged in the *Vita* itself as unusual, is strategically explicable by the remoteness and borderline position of the Moravian and Pannonian area between the East and the West, circumstances which subsequently called forth a similar, though temporary, compliance on the part of Rome. Such a concession was more easily made by Byzantium, with its practice of *laissez-faire* than by the West with its inveterate tenet *tres sunt autem linguae sacrae, his enim tribus linguis super crucem Domini a Pilato fuit causa eius scripta*. One must also remember Professor Dvornik's suggestion that, of the two powerful parties fighting for control of the Byzantine Church and state in the mid-ninth century, the more liberal, democratic, and flexible faction—originating in the Greens of the Hippodrome—was apparently favored by Constantine.

The ideological foundations for the basic Cyrillo-Methodian principle—the equality of all languages and peoples and the sacred right of any vernacular tongue to be used for all spiritual tasks up to the Holy Communion—were drawn from the Bible and Eastern

Patristic literature. All right of seniority was denied to languages, since all of them originated simultaneously at Babel. The reference to the division of tongues emerges in the early Cyrillo-Methodian apologetic literature and serves as an introduction to the Old Russian *letopisi*; the persistent usage of beginning Czech mediaeval chronicles with a narrative about the Tower of Babel was ironically countered by Enea Silvio Piccolomini. The idea of the Pentecostal miracle, which changed the multiplicity of languages from the original punishment into a divine gift of tongues and impelled all languages to glorify the Lord, runs throughout Slavic literatures of Cyrillo-Methodian inspiration, from the Moravian writings to the Russian *Primary Chronicle* and to the Latin Pentecost sequence of the twelfth century, which praised *omnigenarum beatissima munera linguarum* predestined to teach *omnes nationes*, and which entered into the missals of the Prague archdiocese (*Analecta Hymnica*, LIII, 72). This Pentecostal image of every man hearing the apostles speak in his own language and understanding the divine words had been developed in the Eastern Patristic literature, and later, as A. Borst points out, became much more popular in the marginal areas of the Empire than in its metropolis.

Scripture and liturgy in the people's own language was interpreted by the mission to the Slavs as indispensable to comprehension. Particularly significant are the favorite references to the Scripture adduced to consecrate this doctrine. The claim for the comprehension of all the prayers by "all the brethren" was supported in Constantine's *Proglas*", and in his Venetian disputation with the preachers of the "trilingual heresy," by quotations from the First Epistle to the Corinthians; and in the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition the Slavic apostles are constantly represented as the true heirs of St. Paul. The introductions to the *Vitae* (*Const.* I and *Meth.* II) and the alleged letter of the Emperor Michael to Rastislav (*Const.* XIV) paraphrase the verses of I Tim. 2:4 and 7; God "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth," whereunto He ordained a teacher—namely, Paul, according to the Epistle, or, in the two *Vitae*, Constantine and Methodius, respectively. Later

Stephen, the teacher of the Zyrians, was to be similarly introduced in his *Vita*.

The metaphors of Isaiah's verses (29:18; 32:3, 4; 35:5, 6) about the ears of the deaf and the eyes of the blind being opened to apprehend the words of the book, and the tongue of the stammerers (*gogniviyix*") being ready to speak plainly were utilized in order to describe the effect of the sacred Scriptures and mass in the native language. This imagery is paraphrased in the *Proglas*", the *Vita Constantini*, the Moravian *Panegyric to Both Teachers of the Slavic People*, and, praising Vladimir's extension of the brothers' work to Russia, in Ilarion's *Discourse of Law and Grace* and in the *Primary Chronicle*. After the schism this imagery inspired a rancorous tract against the Western Church, which was accused of having abandoned Peter the Apostle in favor of an imaginary imposter, Peter the Stammerer (*gugnivyi*), the adversary of vernacular liturgy.

In both the Venetian disputation of Constantine and the *Primary Chronicle*, Isaiah's images are followed by quotations from the Psalms, especially 95—"O sing unto the Lord a new song; sing unto the Lord, all the earth." Against the "trilinguals" Constantine brings forward the concluding chapter of Mark—16:17 "In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues." The idea that the greater the variety of languages that sing the glory of the Lord, the greater the joy of the heavens runs through the entire tradition. The multiformity of languages and, in Vladimir Monomach's formulation, the uniqueness of each human creature, the *principium individuationis*, is considered the greatest of the Creator's miracles. The notion of new tongues is highly important in the further development of the Cyrillo-Methodian trend. Thus, Ilarion recalls the precept of Matthew 9:17, to put new wine not into old bottles but into new ones, and concludes that new teaching demands new peoples and new languages: *novoe učenie, novy mēxy, novy jazyky, novoe i s'bljudet'sja, jakože i jest*. In this connection the *Panegyric to Both Teachers*, composed in Moravia shortly after the death of Methodius, is particularly revealing: "as two new apostles, they did not build their work on an alien foundation, but having

invented letters anew, they carried them out for a new tongue" (*nova apostola ne na tuždem' osnovanii svoje dĕlo polož'ša n' iznova pisma v' obraz'ša i s' vr'šista v' jazyk' nov*").

The alphabet was a visual symbol of a liturgic and literary language enjoying equal rights with all other tongues that exalt the Lord. Therefore, the Glagolitic letters were not supposed to resemble the Greek model, and this goal was partly achieved by recourse to Oriental patterns, partly perhaps by reshaping Byzantine cryptography. The puzzling Slavic changes in the Greek musical notation are possibly due to a similar intention. The requirement of a new form for a new content underlies the treatise of the monk Xrabr, compiled in Bulgaria at the beginning of the tenth century: it proclaims the superiority of the Slavic alphabet over the Greek, since the former is a Christian creation for pious purposes, while the latter is rooted in heathenism.

From time to time questions are asked—whether the Latin mass would not have been in closer agreement with the people's belief in the magic power of the incomprehensible word; whether the emphasis on liturgic vernacular was not a blunder which caused the downfall of the work of the Slavic apostles, first in Moravia and later in Bohemia. Yet the Slavic people is said to have met the work of both teachers with joy (*s' radostijq*), as, almost five centuries earlier, Armenians reacted to the similar innovation of Nesrop, and we have no contrary evidence. Again, for the conjecture that the substitution of Slavic worship modeled upon Greek for a liturgy of Latin language and rite might have produced discontent, no proof can be furnished. The political background of the suppression of the Cyrillo-Methodian activities in both Moravia and Bohemia gives us no reason to suspect that without a vernacular liturgy they would have been able to survive. Above all, Constantine's warning, reported in his *Vita* XVI and based on Luke 11:52—"Woe unto you, bookmen! for ye have taken away the key of comprehension"—indicates unambiguously that his entire ideology excluded any concession in the principle of common and total intelligibility and equality; there was really no place for an admission that among all the languages of the world declared

to be equal, a few traditionally liturgic languages were, in the terms of modern satire, "more equal."

Partial defeats were unavoidable. Yet from the beginning, the work of the Byzantine mission had a wider destiny. In the four copies of Constantine's *Proglas* "all the Slavs" (*Slověne v'si*) are summoned to listen to the Gospels translated into their language, and the three Serbian manuscripts preserve perfectly the syllabic pattern of the dodecasyllable: *Těm' že uslyšite | Slověne v'si* ("Therefore hearken, all ye Slavs!"); so the arbitrary emendation—*Slověne si* ("hearken, ye Slavs, to this!") is not only clumsy but completely superfluous. Toward the end of the poem the Slavic exhortation grows into a world-wide appeal, "ye nations," modeled upon Isaiah 34:1. The Slavic and the oecumenical scope of the mission alternate in the *Vitae*. According to the *Vita Methodii* VIII, the Pope said to the Pannonian ruler that Methodius was assigned "not only to thee but also to all those Slavic countries," while in the *Vita Constantini* XIV, Rastislav asks the Emperor to send a teacher who could translate the true Christian doctrine into the vernacular, "so that the other countries, on seeing that, would imitate us." Correspondingly, the *Panegyric to Both Teachers of the Slavic People* glorifies Constantine-Cyril for having taught the people to praise the Lord in their own language (*v' svoi jazyk'*), thus "admonishing the whole world to sing in native tongues."

If "all ye Slavs" were addressed, the question arises whether the message had been actually received and the legacy accepted. At the end of the first millennium Slavic dialects, to use Edward Sapir's formulation, were "homogeneous enough to secure the common feeling and purpose needed to create a norm." Throughout the early centuries of Slavic Christianity, according to the concept persuasively vindicated by R. Picchio, the *comunità linguistica Slava ecclesiastica* essentially transcended the differences among the regional recensions of the Slavic written language and among the spiritual literary creations of the individual Slavic nations. Among the most significant manifestations of this supranational unity, one may cite first the intensive inter-Slavic circulation of the ecclesiastical works, both translated and original, then the repeatedly cen-

tripetal tendencies in the development of Church Slavonic, and finally a remarkable diffusion of new literary models. The inter-Slavic growth of favorite literary genres could be exemplified by the Bohemian, Russian, and Serbian princely *vitae*, which reach one of their supreme achievements in the *Life of St. Sava*. When the international Church Slavonic community is taken into account, it appears quite natural that numerous texts of the Bulgarian Golden Age and Czech writings of the tenth and eleventh centuries entered into the Russian literary repository; the various reflections of Czech hagiography in the early Russian *Vitae* and *Eulogies* are a corollary of this radiation. Prokop's Monastery on Sázava, the Bohemian center of Slavic liturgy in the eleventh century, must have maintained a lively intercourse with Kievan Russia; and even a Czech Church Slavonic *Life and Martyrdom* of Boris and Gleb, the most popular Russian saints, composed in Latin style and apparently imported from this monastery, entered into an Old Russian lectionary.

Attempts of some students to place one of the local variants above all other Slavic literatures of the Middle Ages bear the stamp of biased subjectivism. The assertion that Old Russian literature, allegedly the only one endowed with chronicles and epics, excels in this regard the Old Bulgarian and early Czech letters forms a vicious circle, because Church Slavonic literature of Czech and Old Bulgarian recensions has been preserved almost exclusively through Russian copies and because original works of a secular tinge, e.g., the Russian *letopisi* and *voinskie povesti*, did not enter into inter-Slavic circulation. Old Bulgarian or Czech creations of secular content could hardly, therefore, be expected to have survived, and the original scope of these literatures simply remains unknown to us.

Each ancient center of Church Slavonic literature—the Moravian seat of the Byzantine mission, Ochrid, Preslav, Prague, Kiev, Novgorod—leaves its own typical mark on the local production. Comparative evaluation of the technique of translation sometimes discloses a doctrinaire preconception of the critic himself. Approaches to the translator's task differ radically in Moravia, Bulgaria, Kievan Russia, the Tyrnovo school

of Euthymius, or Muscovy. For example, the detached Moravian attitude toward Greek models, which is manifested both in translations and in the Glagolitic letters, should not serve to belittle the literalism of Preslav, which found equally striking expression both in the reformed, Cyrillic alphabet and in the mass production of word-for-word translations. This encyclopedic activity enabled the First Bulgarian Czarism to provide the whole *communità* with a native version of manifold patristic and Byzantine works and with an amazingly expert, fecund, and lasting Slavic terminology for all the branches of contemporaneous erudition.

While in Constantine's and Methodius' lifetime the Slavic translations were apparently made from Greek only, the following two centuries in Bohemia (and perhaps the very end of the ninth century in Moravia) witnessed many translations into Old Church Slavonic from Latin and vice versa, complementing thereby the Greek imprint upon Slavic literature and literary language by a Western impetus. However, the tradition of Slavicized Greek worship had not been lost in the Czech state of the tenth and eleventh centuries, to judge from several vestiges detected by Czech philologists (J. Frček, J. Vašica, F. V. Mareš), and furthermore the Church Slavonic translations from Latin betray the Greek training of their Bohemian authors.

It is true that the time of the first crusade puts an end to Slavic liturgy in Bohemia, but the strength of the historical precedents and the vitality of the Cyrillo-Methodian ideology continued for centuries to stimulate Czech spiritual development; these factors awakened national self-awareness and encouraged the rise and growth of literature and scholarship in the native language; the same tradition underlay the effort of Charles IV to reinstate *vulgare slavonicum* as liturgic language in his Prague *Monasterium Slavorum* in order to unify all Slavs in the Catholic faith, and, on the other hand, inspired the Hussite struggle for vernacular liturgy; the latter example was followed by Luther. In the seventeenth century both Comenius, in the name of the Czech Reformation, and Bohuslav Balbín, the outstanding Czech spokesman of the Counter Reformation, referred emphatically to the unalterable significance of the

Moravian mission and to its *sacratissima missa* in the Slavic language, understandable to all the parishioners. The relationship of Church Slavonic culture in Moravia and Bohemia with the age-old Croatian Glagolitic tradition and with the temporary expansion of these Czech stimuli to Poland still demands a more systematic and objective exploration.

The discussion whether the prolonged faithfulness of the Orthodox Slavic peoples to the Byzantine tradition was a benefit or a cultural handicap is futile. Who is greater and more original—the Bohemian Master of Třeboň and the skillful responses to Latin models in Czech trecento poetry, or the coeval Russian Hesychasts—in painting, Andrej Rublev and in letters Epifanij the Sage with the other artists of the florid style? In any case, no attentive and unprejudiced observer of Russian literature from the eleventh century onward could consider its wide range in the nineteenth century startling and unpredictable. The various stages and forms of symbiosis between Church Slavonic and the native colloquial speech gradually prepared the rich and multifarious constitution of the modern literary language; and with all its far-flung innovations the literature of the St. Petersburg Empire is one bone and one flesh with the written and oral tradition of many centuries. The late Henri Grégoire tersely characterized this continuity when he confessed that, in order to gain a true insight into Leskov's prose, he found Byzantine

Greek to be a more adequate medium than modern French. It is the liturgic chant that stands behind modern poetry, and if word of mouth proves to be a particularly important factor in the formation of new Russian literature, it is because the Church Slavonic tradition was oriented primarily toward the Church, so that the secular genres became the chief dominion of folklore, and hence the latter took an extraordinary place in Russian verbal art as well as in that of other Greco-Orthodox Slavs.

The inquiry into the different temporal and local variants of such fields as the Cyrillo-Methodian ideology, the Church Slavonic language and literature, in particular liturgic poetry with its music, or the corresponding chapters of art history runs the risk of being curtailed and distorted when Slavic responses are treated without regard to Byzantine stimuli, or if, conversely, these responses are viewed as mere slavish replicas of foreign models. When, for instance, in the history of the Church Slavonic chant or of the Digenis epic in its Russian versions, the Slavic traditionalism which often surpasses the conservatism of the Greek forms, and the creative deviations from the Greek patterns, are both consistently taken into account, then Byzantino-Slavic studies substantially enrich both Slavic and Greek philology, poetics, metrics, and musicology. This reciprocal instruction was convincingly illustrated during the Symposium of 1964.